

Children with health needs who cannot attend school policy

The Board of Trustees, CEO and Strategic team are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers to demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work.

This policy was created and ratified by the Trust Board in:	February 2024
The policy owner is:	Strategic Leads
This policy will be reviewed by the Trust Board in: (unless earlier review is recommended by the Trust)	January 2025
Policy Version:	V1
Signed by the Chair of the Board of Trustees:	John Smith

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that:

- Suitable education is arranged for pupils on roll who cannot attend school due to health needs.
- Pupils, staff and parents understand what the school is responsible for when this education is being provided by the local authority.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of the [Education Act 1996](#).

It is also based on guidance provided by the local authority. This can be found at: <https://www.schools.norfolk.gov.uk/pupil-needs/health-needs/medical-needs-service>

This policy complies with our funding agreement.

3. Responsibilities of the school

As a school we refer to the relevant local authority guidance on providing education to children with additional health needs, to see what responsibilities it places on our school in this circumstance.

3.1 If the school makes arrangements

Initially, our school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school. We will work with parents and relevant health professionals to deem if it is appropriate to set work.

3.2 If the local authority makes arrangements

If the school can't make suitable arrangements, Norfolk County Council may become responsible for arranging suitable education for the pupil(s).

In cases where the local authority makes arrangements, our school and trust will:

- Work constructively with the local authority, providers, relevant agencies and parents to ensure the best outcomes for the pupil
- Share information with the local authority and relevant health services as required
- Help make sure that the provision offered to the pupil is as effective as possible and that the child can be reintegrated back into school successfully
- When reintegration is anticipated, work with the local authority to:
 - Plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside the school, allowing the pupil to access the same curriculum and materials that they would have used in school as far as possible
 - Enable the pupil to stay in touch with school life (e.g. through newsletters, emails, invitations to school events or internet links to lessons from their school)
 - Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each child returning to school
 - Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made

4. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trust's Strategic Leads. At every review, it will be approved by the Wellbeing & Achievements Committee.

5. Links to other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Accessibility plan
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions

Appendix 1: Norfolk County Council Medical Needs Service Guidance

The Medical Needs Service is a consent-based service, schools do not have to refer or consult with us for over 15 days of school absence if they are managing/providing provision and support.

For information about the Medical Needs Service please see the [Medical Needs Service webpage](#). Referral forms can be found on this webpage. Please be aware the referral forms cannot be saved and will timeout after 2 hours.

Schools can request Medical Needs Service support for a child who cannot attend school for 15 days or more (consecutive or cumulative) due to illness.

All referrals must be supported by health guidance by a medical professional who has seen the young person in the last 12 weeks.

We can accept referrals from the following professionals:

- CAMHS professional (ie mental health nurse/mental health practitioner)
- Norfolk and Suffolk ME/CFS service (ie Specialist Physiotherapist)
- School nurse
- Paediatrician
- Clinical Child Psychologist
- Consultant Child Psychiatrist
- Other specialist NHS service
- Primary Care Health Professional
- General Practitioner

Health guidance should be sought using the [Joint Medical Protocol](#). This comes in 3 forms:

- Appendix 3 – parent/carer consent form
- Appendix 4 – school form
- Appendix 5 – health form

Schools are responsible for seeking health guidance, we do not ask that parents/carers do this.

Once appendix 3 and 4 have been completed, copies of these should be sent to the most relevant health professional. The JMP can be sent to multiple professionals if that is appropriate. Once a completed appendix 5 has been returned to the school, if it supports referral to the service, it can be uploaded to the referral form.